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INTERROGATION REPORT

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SUMMARY

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A new VC tactic that was explained to VC/NVA troops in KHANH HOA Province as being part of Resolution 13, involved the employment of platoon size units (sometimes larger) to attack secure GVN villages in the lowlands in order to influence the local people and inspire confidence in the VC. At the same time, the VC would establish the infrastructure in these villages which would later support the VC in the "general uprising". The tactic was used in areas of DIEN KHANH District, KHANH HOA Province, in October and November 1967, and was lauded by VC cadres as an effective means of combatting GVN troops, but not so effective against Allied forces.

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1. In approximately late August 1967, Company 2, Battalion 7, Regiment 18B, Division 5, was indoctrinated on Resolution 13. The company was then located in the SONG CAU area, DIEN KHANH District, KHANH HOA Province. The part of the resolution on military operations indicated that the VC/NVA regular and main force units would be employed to attack important GVN bases and to make deep thrusts into populated delta areas which were considered secure by the GVN. The purpose of these operations was to influence the people and inspire confidence in the VC, and to take advantage of the resulting confusion to establish infrastructures in the villages. These infrastructures would support the VC strongly in the forthcoming "general uprising". To implement this goal, the VC organized appropriate military training for various units so they would be able to fight in the lowland areas.
2. The new tactic was called "sticking to the target tactic" (QUAN BAM TRU) and was almost like the tactic of close quarters combat, except that people's houses and the people in them were to be used as shields when the VC fought; this would place the GVN and Allied forces in a very difficult position. In using this tactic, the VC would normally use a platoon size unit because a platoon could fight independently and have mobility. In addition, a platoon was usually sufficient to attack a village where there were only a few self-defense or militia troops. After occupying a village, the VC would stay close in, and dig trenches at important approaches to resist GVN or Allied forces if they attacked. At each such emplacement would be one to three VC soldiers armed with one AK47 and two CKC rifles. The platoon would be armed with a B40 antitank rocket. During the action, all cells had to move frequently so the enemy would not know their real strength. The VC would use the center of the village as an axis from which to run between houses. The idea was to scatter and assemble quickly, to fight and retreat from house to house in order to hold the enemy's attack. By applying this tactic, the enemy would have a difficult time to determine where the front line or main front was so they could concentrate their power. If the tactic was properly applied, one platoon could remain in a village from one to three days in the face of a company-strength attack. The same tactic could be applied by a battalion to hold off a regimental-size attack.
3. Beginning in October 1967, Battalion 7 of Regiment 18B employed this tactic in an operation in the southern part of DIEN KHANH District, KHANH HOA Province. The attack on NGHIEP THANH Hamlet, DIEN BINH Village, was an experiment which they would use in the future. According to the unit cadres' observations, the tactic was very effective. Battalion 7 stayed at NGHIEP THANH Hamlet for one day and two nights.
4. In November 1967, after a period of continuous operation in the southern part of DIEN KHANH District, Battalion 7 organized a meeting to discuss the effect of the tactic. The VC cadres made the following observations:
 - a. It was a perfect tactic to fight against GVN troops because the GVN troops that came to drive the VC from the village did not know the VC strength and therefore did not dare to attack. Whenever a GVN unit came close to the village, the VC would simply need to open fire to stop them, then quickly move to another place. The GVN troops would face a very difficult situation and dared not call in aircraft or artillery to support them for fear that the local population would be killed. Consequently, after a period of freedom of action in a village, the VC would withdraw with only slight casualties.

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- b. The tactic could not be employed properly to fight against Allied forces, because the Allied forces would call in artillery and aircraft support to attack a village; in that case, the VC unit had to leave. Villagers had already complained of the VC remaining in their villages because they were affected.
5. Battalion 18B cadres observed that the tactic would be employed although they knew that two-thirds of their strength and one-third of the village population would be sacrificed. They said that only by doing so could they occupy villages and create influence and prestige; in the future they would aim at the villages along the coastal area of KHANH HOA Province.

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